201503141 Lt. William Harris

A man who had been in a dispute with his employer was arrested and brought to the 71st precinct for driving on a suspended license. While in the holding cell, the man (who has a pacemaker) suffered a cardiac condition and EMTs were called to treat him. He was given oxygen and recovered, but complained that Lieutenant Harris, who was supervising the shift, had cursed at him. His wife, visiting the man because of his heart attack, confirmed that Harris had called the man a "piece of shit" and had cursed when asked for his name and badge number.

Harris denied that he ever had any interaction with the man during his stay in the precinct. Other officers present testified that Harris had interacted with the man but denied he had cursed or failed to provide his name and shield number.

The CCRB investigator identified and interviewed the two independent EMTs who had treated the man in the holding cell. Each confirmed that Lieutenant Harris had interacted with the man, that the man had asked for his name and shield number, and that in response Lieutenant Harris had cursed at the man and failed to provide his name and shield number.

The CCRB substantiated allegations that Lieutenant Harris had failed to provide his name and shield number and that he had been discourteous. It further found that he had lied when he said he had no interaction with the man—statements that were contradicted by independent civilian testimony and by the testimony of other officers.

The NYPD punished Harris by giving him a Command Discipline B. He subsequently left the NYPD.

a 6'4", 210 pound white male with gray hair and blue eyes, was interviewed at the CCRB on April 29, was years old at the time of the incident.
On April 21, 2015, at approximately 11:30 am, was sitting in his car in front of Brooklyn. He was having an argument with his employer, who stood on the sidewalk next to the car, over a sum of money that his employer believed was owed to him. Two officers, PO Lomax Augustin and PO1, approached and his employer and inquired about the nature of their dispute. PO Augustin informed that this was a civil rather than a criminal matter, and that he did not have to hand the money over to his employer. PO Augustin also informed his employer that he would have to take
PO Augustin asked for his identification and handed over his driver's license. PO Augustin ran the license and found that it was suspended. PO Augustin and PO1 arrested for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license. They transported him to the 71 st Precinct stationhouse. On the way in, he passed the desk and saw Sgt. Comas sitting behind it. He read Sgt. Comas' name from the nameplate on his chest. PO Augustin and PO1 placed in a holding cell. That was the last time saw PO1.
Approximately forty-five minutes later, PO Augustin came to the cell where pedigree information from him. It is a pedigree information from him him him him him him him him him hi
has a pacemaker and began have a cardiac episode. EMS was called and four EMTs responded to the stationhouse in two ambulances. It was determined that his cardiac episode was not severe, and EMT3 and EMT4 departed. EMT1 and EMT2 tended to in the holding cell. could see Lt. Harris through the cell's Plexiglas window. thought he looked disgruntled. EMT1 and EMT2 placed on a gurney in order to remove him from the stationhouse to the ambulance for transport. They wheeled him out of the holding cell and past the desk. Lt. Harris was walking out from behind the desk, and as EMT1, EMT2, and PO Augustin (who was walking with them) were about to pass him, when he asked Lt. Harris, "What are your name and shield number?" Lt. Harris was standing directly next to when he asked this. Lt. Harris said in an aggressive tone, "You're a smart guy. Go figure it out for your fucking self. The next time you come to my precinct you'll be here overnight and you'll have a lot harder time than you're having right now." Sgt. Comas, who was still sitting at the desk when was wheeled past it, may have been close enough to hear the conversation. He was approximately 10 to 15 feet away. Lt. Harris then walked past and the EMTs, who exited the stationhouse and got in the ambulance. was sure that the EMTs heard his exchange with Lt. Harris, as they agreed that the treatment he received from the lieutenant was highly inappropriate and unprofessional. was also certain that PO Augustin heard Lt. Harris' comments to as he was standing right next to
The am balance transported to Hospital. Believed it was probably after 2 pm when they arrived. Hospital did not remember if PO Augustin rode in the ambulance or not, but PO Augustin was briefly present asked him for the name of the lieutenant he had spoken with several times before PO Augustin finally stated that it was Lt. Harris. PO Augustin told that he would receive a DAT, and then five minutes later told him that his application for a DAT had been denied. PO Augustin was relieved by another officer who stayed with until he was transported back to the 71st Precinct stationhouse.
stayed in the holding cell at the stationhouse for another 8 hours before being taken to central bookings.

PO Augustin: shield 31468, uniformed PO1: m/w, 6'0", 200-225 pounds, uniformed

Lt. Harris: m/w, 6'4", 230-240 pounds, dark hair, clean shaven, uniformed with white shirt Sgt. Comas: m/h 5'10" dark hair, clean-shaven, in uniform with chevrons on sleeves, gold shield

EMT1: m/w EMT2: f/b EMT3: m/h EMT4: m/h

a5'4", 220 pound white female with blonde hair and blue eyes, was interviewed at the CCRB on April 29, 2015. She was a years old at the time of the incident.
On April 21, 2015, at approximately 1:30 pm, had been arrested and was at the 71st Precinct stationhouse. took a cab to the stationhouse and arrived there at approximately 1:45 pm. She walked into the waiting area before the desk and met PO Augustin, who asked who she was and then introduced himself. He told her that was in a holding cell in the back and that he had been involved in an altercation with his boss. PO Augustin told her the officers at the Precinct were trying to get everything "worked out," and that she and would be able to leave shortly. He asked to wait in the waiting area and told her he would be back in a few minutes.
waited for between twenty minutes and a half hour. PO Augustin came into the waiting area and told that was having a cardiac episode. He told to follow him to the holding cell to see She followed to the holding cell, which was near the desk, and found very upset and being treated by EMT1 and EMT2. He was receiving oxygen. spoke with her husband for approximately 45 seconds before she was told to go back out the waiting area.
As was waiting in the waiting area, Lt. Harris appeared behind the desk. She had not seen him until that point. Lt. Harris appeared to be looking at several video monitors behind the desk and through a Plexiglas window on the other side of which was and saying, "This guy's an asshole," and, "This guy's a real piece of shit." He repeated at least three times that was a "piece of shit." knew Lt. Harris was referring to but was afraid to say anything to him because she was afraid of how he might react. She was sitting approximately 15 feet away from him. She also saw that there was a sergeant behind the desk, who was sitting between 3 and 6 feet from Lt. Harris and did not respond to him. She knew he was a sergeant because at some point while she was waiting, an officer who was otherwise uninvolved in the incident walked up to the desk and said, "Hey, sarge."
continued to wait until PO Augustin walked her out of the stationhouse and then returned inside to see what was happening with waited outside for about 90 seconds before the two EMTs exited the stationhouse with PO Augustin and encounter with another officer who had spoken rudely to her husband. To determine the two EMTs exited the stationhouse to the two EMTs exited the stationhouse EMT1, and EMT2 discussing an encounter with another officer who had spoken rudely to her husband. To determine the two EMTs exited the stationhouse to the two EMTs exited the stationhouse to the two EMTs exited the stationhouse and then returned inside to see what was happening with waited outside for about 90 seconds before the two EMTs exited the stationhouse to the two EMTs exited the stationhouse and then returned inside to see what was happening with waited outside for about 90 seconds before the two EMTs exited the stationhouse to the two EMTs exited the stationhouse and then returned inside to see what was happening with waited outside for about 90 seconds before the two EMTs exited the stationhouse to the two EMTs exited the stationhouse and then returned inside to see what was happening with provided the stationhouse and then returned inside to see what was happening with provided the stationhouse and then returned inside to see what was happening with provided the stationhouse and th
Ms. Harris did not recall what happened to the other two EMTs who had arrived. She only knew there were two more because she saw a second ambulance parked outside.
learned PO Augustine's and Lt. Harris' names after the incident.
PO Augustin: Lt. Harris: m/w, over 6'0", dark hair (slightly graying) wearing a bulletproof vest over a light blue shirt SGT1: m/h, uniformed, approximately 30 years old, "well-groomed"
EMT1: f/h, medium brown skin EMT2: f/b, 5'8"-9", heavyset, short black hair EMT3: EMT4:

Lt. Williams Harris, a 6'2" white male with brown hair and brown eyes, was interviewed at the CCRB on May 29, 2015. He was 50 years old at the time of the incident.
Lt. Harris had no prepared any memo book entries regarding this incident.
On May 28, 2015 Lt. Harris was the platoon commander for the 71st Precinct. He was inside the stationhouse for the majority of his tour. Lt. Harris was not aware of arrest when it took place and did not see brought into the stationhouse. He was not familiar with second until after he has been arrested. Lt. Harris first saw sitting inside the cell area behind the desk. Sgt. Comas was the desk sergeant at that time and was behind the desk with Lt. Harris. He did not remember if any other officers were present in the vicinity of the desk while was in the cell area. From his position behind the desk, Lt. Harris could see through a Plexiglas window. Lt. Harris did not remember if had any interactions with any officers while he was inside the cell area. He did not remember who the arresting officer was but presumed spoke with him.
Sgt. Vigilance, the patrol supervisor who verified arrest, explained to Lt. Harris that arrested for operating a motor vehicle with a suspended license. He also explained to Lt. Harris that was in possession of a sum of money that his employer believed did not belong to him. Harris did not remember, came to the stationhouse and spoke with Lt. Harris. He explained to Lt. Harris that employer, whose name Lt. Harris did not remember, came to the stationhouse and spoke with Lt. Harris. He explained to Lt. Harris that employer, whose name Lt. had taken money from him. Lt. Harris told Sgt. Vigilance to charge with petit larceny so that the money would be vouchered and its ownership could be decided by an ADA. was processed for a DAT which was later denied because of his arrest record and probation status.
While inside the cell area, began to experience pain in his chest. EMTs were called and treated inside the cell area. was removed to a hospital because of a condition related to his heart. Lt. Harris did not see leave the cell area or the stationhouse and did not encounter where he was when was removed from the stationhouse. He did not see any EMTs escorting and di not have any interaction with any EMT.
Lt. Harris never referred to as an "asshole" or a "piece of shit." Lt. Harris was not aware of any officer ever using these phrases to, or in reference to him. He never had any direct interaction with and never spoke with him. did not ask Lt. Harris for his name or shield number and Lt. Harris never said to him, "Go figure it out for your fucking self." Lt. Harris did not know if was near enough to him at any point to read his name and shield number from his shield and name plate. He did not have any sort of verbal argument or altercation with
Lt. Harris did not know which officer or officers transported to the hospital but speculated that it was likely the arresting officer.
Lt. Harris stated that he heard after the incident that was upset that he had been charged with petit larceny and had been given Lt. Harris' name. Lt. Harris did not remember who told him this and did not know who had given his name to had filed a complaint.

Sgt. Daniel Comas, a 5'9", 210 pound Hispanic male with brown hair and brown eyes, was interviewed at the CCRB on June 23, 2015. He was 29 years old at the time of the incident. Sgt. Comas had not prepared any memo book entries regarding this incident. At approximately 11:30 am on April 21, 2015 Sgt. Comas was assigned as the 71st Precinct's Desk Sergeant. Lt. Harris was the acting Patrol Supervisor. Sgt. Comas was at the desk when PO Augustin and entered the stationhouse. PO Augustin told Sgt. Comas that had been arrested for a violation of . PO Augustin frisked and recovered approximately \$900 in cash from his person. PO Augustin counted the money. stated that he had collected the money performing work for his employer he requested that the money be given to a family member. was allowed to keep the money on his person as the officers believed his dispute with his employer to be a civil matter. was placed in a holding cell. The cell area was visible from the area behind the desk via a glass window in the employer, wall. entered the stationhouse. He showed Sgt. Comas receipts and stated that had performed work for him as a , had collected approximately \$900 dollars for the work performed, and the money. Sgt. Comas determined that the dispute constituted a criminal matter and decided to with petit larceny. PO Augustin collected the money from and vouchered it. Sgt. Comas told PO Augustin to give a DAT. the complained of pain in his chest and stated he suffered from a heart condition and had a pacemaker. Sgt. Comas did not remember to whom made this complaint but knew that an officer brought it to his attention. Sgt. Comas called an ambulance for Two or three EMTs arrived and attended to in the cell area. Sgt. Comas did not remember what they looked like and did not make any entries in the command log regarding their arrival or departure. They placed him on a gurney. While was with the EMTs, his wife, arrived at the stationhouse. in the cell area. Sgt. Comas did not recall any interaction between She was allowed to see Harris or any other officer other than himself. When the EMTs determined condition was stable, PO Augustin to a hospital and Sgt. Comas waited to hear back in regards to took his fingerprints. The EMTs then transported the DAT, which was later denied. PO Augustin accompanied to the hospital. Sgt. Comas did not recall any interaction between Lt. Harris and Lt. Harris was in and out of the stationhouse was present. Sgt. Comas made the decision to charge throughout the time when and Lt. Harris' only involvement in the decision was when Sgt. Comas informed him of it. Sgt. Comas did not recall if Lt. Harris made any statements about while was inside the cell area. Sgt. Comas "did not see" Lt. Harris as an "asshole" or a "piece of shit." To his knowledge Lt. Harris never used any profanity in regards to Sgt. Comas informed Lt. Harris via radio that an ambulance had been called for Sgt. Comas did not recall if Lt. Hennessey was present near the desk when EMS arrived. When was wheeled out of the stationhouse he did not seem upset and had a calm demeanor. Sgt. Comas, who was behind the desk as was leaving the stationhouse and about 20 feet from the exit, did not witness any interaction between and Lt. Harris. He did not witness request Lt. Harris' name and shield number from Lt. Harris or any other officer. Lt. Harris never said, "You're a smart guy. Go figure it out for your fucking self." No argument of any sort took place between the two men.

PO Lomax Augustin, a 5'11", 202 pound black male with black hair and brown eyes, was interviewed at the CCRB on June 23, 2015. He was 40 years old at the time of the incident.

PO Augustin had prepared the following memo book entries in regards to this incident:

-Tues 04/21/15 Tour 0900 x 1735
Observed 2 males arguing - one chasing a blue honda fit NY plate and a male white later known as operating that same Honda Fit blue driving away from the other male. We stopped the van in front of the Honda while one states he doesn't have a license - I fired him from my store - because he owes me money and he has the company receipt book. It is states he owes me commission off a couple of thousands [illegible]. It is license came back revoked with 13 suspensions. Asked the store clerk. Later informed that the later stated that if you don't want to pay me I;m keeping the money. The store clerk stated only \$848 which was later vouchered Invoice # In
Arrest of
On April 21, 2015 at approximately 11:30 am PO Augustin witnessed chasing blue Honda fit. PO Lomax and his partner PO Gardner stopped the men to ask what the argument was about. was in possession of a quantity of money which belonged to him. could not produce any receipts to show that the money was his, so PO Augustin told him it was a civil matter and he would have to take to court. PO Augustin asked for his license and ran a check, which revealed that license was suspended. was arrested for a VTL violation. PO Augustin and PO Gardner placed in their RMP and transported him to 721st Precinct stationhouse, where was placed in a cell. Sgt. Comas, the Desk Sergeant, was at the desk when Supervisor, was not present.
PO Augustin began to process inside the cell area. Lt. Harris called him out to the desk. Lt. Harris and Sgt. Comas were behind the desk and had been speaking with receipts showing that the money in possession was obtained for work performed for Augustin believed Lt. Harris was not aware of determined that the incident constituted a criminal matter and told PO Augustin to charge with petit larceny for failing to return the money. Lt. Harris was calmly listening to
PO Augustin returned to the cell. He told order of PO Augustin's lieutenant, was being charged with petit larceny. grabbed his chest and said that he was feeling pain there. He also said he had a heart condition. PO Augustin immediately told Sgt. Comas to call for EMS, who responded within a few minutes. An EMS unit arrived but was not equipped to deal specifically with a heart condition. They called for a second EMS unit that was better equipped. Two EMTs, whose appearance PO Augustin did not recall, entered the cell area and attended to outside of the cell in which he had been placed. There was a window behind the desk

through which could be seen being treated by EMS, although the inside of the cells were not visible. Lt. Harris never made any statements about at that time. Lt. Harris did not refer to as an "asshole" or a "piece of shit." however, was upset that he had been charged with petit larceny. However, PO Augustin did not recall any specific statements made in protest. In the never asked PO Augustin to identify Lt. Harris and PO Augustin never did so verbally or visually.
wife, arrived at the stationhouse to pick up car. She was told EMS was attending to him because he had experienced pain in his chest. She was allowed to visit him briefly inside the cell area.
When was stabilized, the EMTs wheeled him out of the stationhouse, past the desk. PO Augustin walked next to them. Lt. Harris was behind the desk. did not request Lt. Harris' name and Lt. Harris did not say "You're a smart guy. Go figure it out for your fucking self." Lt. Harris never used any profanity toward or in reference to Lt. Harris and never interacted in any manner whatsoever.
was transported to Hospital in an ambulance and PO Augustin followed in his RMP. At Hospital PO Augustin received a call from Lt. Harris, who stated that Augustin told that the ticket had been denied. Harris or any other officer's name. PO Augustin never heard Augustin was relieved at approximately 5:20 pm, at which point he returned to the stationhouse and finished processing arrest.

, a 5'10", 165 pound white male with brown hair and blue eyes, was interviewed at the CCRB on July 2, 2015. He was a years old at the time of the incident and was employed as a paramedic.
On April 21, 2015 responded to an incident at the 71st Precinct stationhouse, located at 421 Empire Boulevard in Brooklyn. Two other EMTs also arrived at the stationhouse, but there were not equipped to handle cardiac issues and did not attend to There, he and EMT treated in the cell area. had a pacemaker and was experiencing pain in his chest.
was complaining to a black officer inside the cell area. He stated that he had followed the officer's instructions and had nonetheless been arrested. He felt that he was being charged unfairly. In the charges against a conversation with the black officer inside the cell area. No other officer interacted with inside the cell area. In the complex of the charges against area wife also visited him briefly inside the cell area. In the complex of the complex of the charges against area wife also visited him briefly inside the cell area. In the complex of the charges against area wife.
and placed in a wheelchair and wheeled him out of the cell area. As they passed through the area near the desk, a lieutenant was walking in the opposite direction down the hall. recognized a photo of Lt. William Harris and identified him as the lieutenant in question. He did not know the lieutenant's name, however. who sounded upset, asked the Lt. Harris for his name and shield number, and Lt. Harris refused to provide them. Lt. Harris responded verbally to he did not recall what statements he made other than that he dismissed in a gruff manner. did not recall if Lt. Harris used any profanity toward did not remember if Lt. Harris said, "You're a smart guy. Go figure it out for your fucking self." He stated that the aforementioned statement "rang a bell" but that he could not say for certain if Lt. Hennessey said that. He recalled with certainty that there was animosity between and the lieutenant. He did not specifically recall if Lt. Harris said, "The next time you come to my precinct you'll be here overnight and you'll have a lot harder time than you're having now," but stated that it sounded familiar.
believed the black officer likely escorted from the stationhouse with him and but did not specifically remember. He did not recall if there were other officers nearby or behind the desk who might have heard the lieutenant's refusal to provide his name and shield number to had any conversation about the lieutenant's behavior after they exited the stationhouse.

a 5'7" 228 pound black female with black hair and brown eyes, was interview at the CCRB on July 15, 2015. She was a paramedic years old at the time of the incident and was employed as a paramedic.
did not initially remember any incident that took place on April 21, 2015 at the 71st Precinct stationhouse. When she was shown a photo of however, she remembered the incident. were called to the 71st Precinct stationhouse. Two other EMTs were there briefly but they left quickly and remember them clearly. and treated in the cell area, but was not inside a cell. was crying and complained that he had been arrested wrongfully. He stated that he had not stolen the money, that he had been falsely accused by his employer, and that the officers had not listened to his side of the story. At least one officer was in the cell area with but could not remember if it was only one or what that officer looked like. She did not remember if there was a black male officer present. An officer told photo and fingerprints and that he would be allowed to go home after visiting the hospital. An officer took photos and fingerprints and then told that he would be returned to the stationhouse after leaving the hospital and would not be allowed to return home.
was placed in a wheelchair or on a gurney to be transported out of the stationhouse, but did not remember which. She was walking 8 to 9 feet behind while he was being wheeled out because she had picked up her equipment after he was wheeled out of the cell area. did not initially remember if had any interaction with any officer while exiting the stationhouse. When asked if she remember an interaction between and a lieutenant, however, she did recall witnessing a negative interaction between a photo of Lt. Harris, she stated that he was the lieutenant with whom a photo of Lt. Harris, she stated that he was the lieutenant with whom had a negative interaction and remembered the details of their interaction more clearly. As was being wheeled through the hallway near the desk, Lt. Harris walked by made a comment to Lt. Harris to the effect that his arrest and treatment were unfair. He asked Lt. Harris for his name and shield number. In response Lt. Harris made. had not spoken rudely or angrily to Lt. Harris and was surprised by the Lieutenant's reaction. She was also concerned that the lieutenant had no provided with his name as she believed members of the NYPD were required to do so. Harris heard request for his name and shield number. did not recognize the statements "You're a smart guy. Go figure it out for your fucking self" as statements made by Lt. Harris but was certain that he used the word "fuck" in response to request.
An officer, who had been escorting out, overheard the interaction. did not remember the officer's appearance and did not remember if it was the same officer who had been in the cell area with believed the officers behind the desk also heard the interaction but could not describe them.
Outside of the stationhouse spoke with his wife briefly before entering the ambulance. and then transported him to Hospital.